

KOLCHAK

Autocrat and Tyrant


*The actual story of Kolchak
and his methods, told by an
American official recently
returned from Siberia.*

Anti-Bolsheviks and Mr. Spargo

By WILLIAM HARD

"Let the Truth Be Known"

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The Rise of a New Russian Autocracy

RETURNING to the United States after an absence of nine months, I was amazed at the attitude of some of our large publications with respect to Russia. Kolchak, whom I have seen break up a democratic government in Siberia with the ruthlessness of a Tartar conqueror; who has suppressed free speech and free press; who has either jailed or exiled or murdered every member of the Russian Constituent Assembly upon whom he could lay his hands; and who has caused the opponents of his rule of the fist to be tortured and killed—Kolchak is represented to the American people as a disinterested person who is trying to establish democratic government in Russia!

And now comes word that the Council of Four at Paris has decided to supply Kolchak with money, provisions and ammunition, with a promise of recognition of his government, on the hypothesis that he will convene a Constituent Assembly as soon as he has taken Moscow! Moscow is, of course, a long, long way off from Kolchak. But that the hypothesis is none the less a dangerous one I hope to make clear from the acts of Kolchak himself.

How do I come to know these things, and what are my qualifications for estimating their importance?

I sailed from San Francisco for Vladivostok early in September, 1918. I was sent by the Committee on Public Information. For what purpose neither the Committee nor I really knew. In a general way it was felt that I might be useful in Siberia. I had organized the Russians in the United States for the memorable Fourth of July, 1918. I spoke Russian well, knew the peculiar psychology of the Russian mind, liked the Russians and felt with them. I was moreover familiar with the history of the Russian revolutionary movement and the minutiae of Russian socialist party politics. One of my recommendations was perhaps the fact that I considered Bolshevism—as I still consider it—an idealist's dream, an historical soap-bubble.

In Siberia I found an abundance of

work awaiting me. I was first loaned by the Committee on Public Information to the War Trade Board, for whom I took stock of the immense quantities of wealth that had accumulated in the port of Vladivostok during the last four years. I was next loaned to the American Red Cross, first to handle the now famous "Death Train" situation and its sequels, the epidemics of typhoid fever, typhus and dysentery; then to construct an anti-typhus train and fit out an anti-typhus expedition; next I did some literary work for the Committee, and was finally again loaned by them to the American Red Cross to accompany a shipload of invalided Czechoslovaks around India to Italy.

I thus had every opportunity to enter into the very heart of the Siberian situation.

My first glimpse of what the future held in store was on the way from Tzuruga, Japan, to Vladivostok.

Among the polyglot passengers who crowded the boat, I met a remarkable man—Voinoff. He was about 45, of medium stature, with light-gray, penetrating eyes, harsh features and long, blond hair. His costume was a mixture of the uniform of a French captain of infantry and the vestments of a Russian priest. I was told by passengers who had crossed the Pacific with him, that he had given such free expression to his hatred of America on the trans-Pacific steamer, as to get into a bad scrap with a group of American army officers. I became acquainted with him. We established ourselves in a corner among the lifeboats on the upper deck, where we talked uninterruptedly for many hours.

It was true that he detested America—an earthly, a vulgar, a despicable conglomeration of hybrids, with mob-rule for a government. America's boast of democracy—what did it amount to? The boast of a full pot of flesh and a full measure of beans!

"If I believed even for one moment that such degraded materialism was the destiny of the human race, I would jump overboard," he declared.

ed. "The true destiny" of mankind is, not to rest content with a full dinner pail, like America; nor like the French, to erect likenesses of men and women in marble and in bronze, but to produce a race of men like unto the Creator himself—His true representatives upon this earth. To produce and maintain such an aristocracy is worth all the blood and tears of the entire human race."

He was, in short, an aristocrat by conviction and a monarchist as well, and he was on his way to Siberia as an emissary from the Russian officers on the French front to initiate a propaganda for the restoration of the autocracy.

"But not the Romanoffs," he said. "A monarch who can not maintain himself upon the throne is not worthy of it. There is but one man in Russia who is strong enough to meet the situation. He is known to be faithful to the Holy Greek Catholic religion, and he alone can be depended upon to purge the sacred ground of Russia of Jews, Poles, Bolsheviks, infidels and foreigners."

"Who is that man?" I asked.

"His name is Kolchak," announced the military priest.

It was several weeks before I realized that Voinoff was not insane.

Conditions in Siberia in October 1918.

In order that the reader may have a good insight into the Siberian situation as I found it in October, 1918, it is important that he understand the role of Vladivostok in Siberia.

Vladivostok is the gateway to Siberia. It is situated at the end of a long line of railway that extends across two continents, from Brest in the westernmost end of Europe to the Sea of Japan.

Foreign trade and foreign manufacture, and the products of Siberia destined for other countries—outside of Europe—enter and leave by way of Vladivostok. The name of Vladivostok—the Ruler of the East—is, therefore, well chosen; for whoever is in possession of Vladivostok is in practical possession of Siberia.

In 1901 the population of the city was 24,000. Of these, 23,000 were men, and the other thousand women. It was, in fact, nothing but a Russian fortress. Today Vladivostok has

a population of about 150,000.

During the war the Tsar found it expedient to extend the institution of the Zemstvo to Siberia. It proved a signal success. Local self-government resulted in local efficiency. A new spirit of patriotism awakened, manifesting itself in an increased supply of butter, eggs, flax, wheat, and other Siberian products for the eastern front.

With the fall of the Kerensky regime, the Bolsheviks, as was the case in European Russia, substituted a Soviet government in place of the regularly elected Zemstvo administration. On the 29th of June, however, the Czechoslovaks, who had been quartered by the Bolsheviks upon the eminences around Vladivostok, followed the advice of the Allied Powers and took the city by marching through it. In justice to some of our newspapers who gave vivid accounts of the bloody battles incident to this achievement be it said that on the following day a few Bolsheviks did intrench themselves in a building near the station and a few shots were interchanged. Two days later Nikolsk-Ussuriysky fell, and the rest of Siberia followed suit. The members of the Vladivostok Soviet were, on general principles, interned in a Czechoslovak camp. The Zemstvo officials returned to their places. Upon my arrival at Vladivostok I found the Zemstvo government in full swing.

But what is a Zemstvo?

A Zemstvo corresponds to a state administration in the United States, with its legislative, executive and judiciary divisions. Its officials are elected in about the same manner as state officials are elected here.

The new administration was laboring under great difficulties. There was no manufacturing worth speaking of in Siberia, and speculation in the necessities of life ran wild in spite of the vigilance of the authorities. The railway system had broken down, and the housing problem was distressing. Within the past four years Siberia had doubled its population, and during that period hardly a single house had been built. The situation was aggravated by the fact that the Allied troops had arrived, with their Red Cross, Y. M. C. A.,

publicity bureaus, and other bodies. And all the time wretched crowds of refugees were pressing eastward, toward Vladivostok—Russians, Serbs, Greeks, Poles, Jews—men and women and children of all nationalities and conditions. They settled in railway cars, railway stations, military barracks—wherever there were four walls and a roof.

The Zemstvo officials in Vladivostok worked like beavers. Amid all the difficulties and mistakes, one saw clearly that a strong democratic system of government was gradually emerging. At the City of Tomsk the several Siberian Zemstvos were being co-ordinated, and a central government was gradually but certainly evolving and assuming definite outlines. At the same time about 90 members of the original Russian Constituent Assembly which had been dispersed by the Bolsheviks, assembled at Ufa, a town on the Siberian side of the Ural Mountains. National groups added to the representation and an All-Russian Convention was held. The convention elected a Directorate of Five to organize an All-Russian government. The seat of the new government was Omsk.

The All-Russian Directorate fell to work. The several ministries were organized and the labor of rebuilding the country proceeded apace.

One heard very little about the Bolsheviks at this time. The fact was that the Siberian Soviets had never gone to great extremes, as in European Russia, and the changes from Zemstvo to Soviet government and back again to Zemstvo government had not been of such a drastic nature as to cause great bitterness. The mass of the people were very hopeful and had great confidence in their new Zemstvo officials, whom they felt to be truly representative of their interests and ideals.

Their attitude toward the Americans was that of a small boy in distress who sees his strong older brother coming to his rescue.

"The Americans are our brothers," I heard on all sides. "The Americans fought for their own liberty and won it. Now they have come to help us win our liberty. They will show us how to establish a United States of Russia."

The newspapers were full of accounts of the excellence of the American soldiers: how they cooked their coffee in the morning by the side of the railway train; how they laughed and played and sang; how their officers wore nearly the same clothing as the men, and were neither arrogant nor cruel; how considerate and polite they were with women; and how generous with cigarettes and kopeks.

The Zemstvos were working out a scheme of government on the model of the United States. "By the time we are through," one of their leading officials said to me, "we shall have your American Constitution, with such changes as will accommodate it to the peculiarities of Russian life. The particular changes to which I refer are such as will allow of a broader expansion along the lines of national, state, county and municipal ownership of public utilities."

"We have established a special Bureau in our Zemstvo," the chairman told me, "whose business it is to obtain all possible information about the way America lives and works, so that we can teach the Siberians the best possible methods. Permit me to introduce you to the chief of this bureau—M. Afanasyeff."

And the excellent Afanasyeff proceeded to explain to me the workings of his bureau. . . .

Such was the condition of Siberia in the early days of October 1918.

First Inroads of the New Autocracy

One morning, about the middle of October, I found M. Medvieyeff, the Chairman of the Maritime Province Zemstvo (an office equivalent to that of governor with us) in a gloomy mood.

He had received a disquieting piece of news. A Commissar was arriving in Vladivostok, sent by the All-Russian Directorate at Omsk, to superintend the affairs of the Province. What the exact function of this Commissar would be he did not know. A sort of inspector, to watch over the Constitution of the Province? But the Constitution of the Province provided for no such office. It was very disquieting.

The Commissar, M. Zimmerman, indeed arrived in Vladivostok, and

with him an order from the All-Russian Directorate that the militia of the Province be handed over to him.

"The militia is your police," I said to M. Medvieveff, "how can you do without it?"

"We no longer have the power to arrest a pickpocket," he replied in his modest way.

"But why should the Directorate want to do such a thing? Most of its members are of your own party?"

A few members of the Executive Council entered the Chairman's cabinet.

"We have a theory" said one of them. "We have come to the conclusion that someone else is speaking for the Directorate."

"And the Directorate itself?"

"Is put out of the way."

"How can you imagine such a thing?"

"We can imagine nothing else."

Did they have their own secret information or was it instinct that led them on the right trail?

I had no time to conjecture myself. For while political history was thus making in Siberia, I was busy with my own work—taking stock of the accumulated stores of wealth in Vladivostok. The Tsar's old officials were bad bookkeepers. An item indicating the presence in Vladivostok of some millions of pounds of sewing machines and typewriters—articles greatly needed in Siberia—proved upon investigation to be nothing but electric bulbs. Some 75,000,000 pounds of tea and a similar quantity of rice were reluctant to make their appearance, as were a number of other articles in quantities of millions of pounds. But the most difficult task of all was to ascertain the contents of the private warehouses. Yet it was highly important for Siberia to get at the facts. For American merchants could not be expected to ship their products to Siberia unless they knew in advance what the Siberians themselves had on hand.

"You will find our cornerers of the people's bread a hard lot to deal with," I was told on every side.

The Zemstvo had a law on its statutes by which the merchants could be ordered to submit inventories of their stock. This order the officials of the Zemstvo government were very anxious to issue, for above all things

they valued the co-operation of the United States.

"Then why don't you issue this order at once?" I asked them.

"Because M. Tseklinsky insists that he will issue the order which you want."

M. Tseklinsky was the newly-arrived representative of the Ministry of Supplies at Omsk. It was true that he had promised to issue the order. But his procrastinations were endless and his excuses infinite.

"But he has promised a dozen times in the last few days, and he still keeps on postponing," I objected.

"He will never issue it," was M. Medvieveff's laconic declaration.

"Why not, when it is so plainly in the interests of mere Siberia."

"Because the speculators are among his staunchest political supporters. He will not molest them in the interests of mere Siberia."

"Then why don't you issue the order yourselves?"

"We probably shall. In a day or two the situation will clear up. . ."

The very next day there appeared in the newspapers an open letter by the newly arrived official from Omsk. It was to the effect that the Omsk representative had no right to interfere with the workings of that body. Furthermore, the letter stated that the regularly elected authorities of the Province were responsible to the people for the billions of rubles worth of commodities. They refused to hand them over to a person who bore no responsibility to the people of the Province.

But the Omsk government was ready for the occasion. M. Tseklinsky informed the Zemstvo administration that if it did not hand over to him immediately all the supplies of the Province, he would order what practically amounted to a blockade—he would stop railway shipments to and from Vladivostok.

The Zemstvo administration submitted, and vast quantities of supplies in the maritime Province were delivered to the government of Omsk.

Some days later the following item appeared in the newspapers:

"The temporary All-Russian government issued an order to the effect that the Siberian Duma which had been dissolved by order of the Ad-

ministrative Council, should be convoked again. Two members of the temporary government, Vologodsky and General Boldireff, disagreed with this order, and caused the arrest of the other members, Avksientieff, Argunoff and Zenzinoff. In this arrest of the members of the government, the army took an active part. Almost simultaneously Vice-Admiral Kolchak, who had been prominent in the aforesaid occurrences, was appointed minister of the army and navy."

The Siberian Duma, then, the central body of the Zemstvo system, had been dissolved, and dissolved by order of the Administrative Council. "By order of the Administrative Council!" That phrase had been the slogan of the Tsar's regime, and its magic power had sent a hundred-thousand freedom-loving Russians to the dungeon, to the gallows and to hard labor in the mines. "By order of the Administrative Council" stood for the words—without a trial!

And the majority of the members of the Directorate arrested . . . through the active participation of the army . . . I saw a black cloud lowering over unhappy Siberia.

Kolchak's Coup d'Etat.

The first part of November, 1918, may well be named by the future historian of Siberia "the Days of Suspense." People felt that events of tremendous importance for all Russia were transpiring in the inner circles at Omsk. Men and women crowded the sidewalks in front of the newspapers at Vladivostok early in the morning, waiting impatiently for the first copies that came off the press. The newspapers demanded information as to what was happening behind closed doors at Omsk. But the telegraph was silent, rumors were contradictory, and the Omsk representatives non-committal. The political skies were heavily overcast, and the atmosphere heavy and oppressive. Men smelled the odor of sulphur that precedes the eruption of a volcano.

On the 20th of November I was handling the "Death Train" situation at Nikolsk-Ussuriysky.

Upon entering the railway station that evening, I was startled to see

large posters, which read as follows:

DECREE

Of the Council of Ministers, Nov. 18, 1918.

The Minister of the Army and Navy, Vice-Admiral Alexander Kolchak, is promoted to the office of Admiral.

Chairman of the Council of Ministers,

Peter Vologodsky,

Business Manager of the Council of Ministers,

Georg Telberg.

In view of the difficulties of the government and the necessity of concentrating the entire highest power into the hands of a single person, the council of ministers has decided:

To hand over temporarily the highest governmental power to Admiral Alexander Kolchak, attaching to him the title of Supreme Ruler.

Chairman of the Council of Ministers,

Peter Vologodsky,

Business Manager of the Council of Ministers,

Georg Telberg.

DECREE

Of the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the Land and the Sea, The City of Omsk, Nov. 18, 1918.

1.—On this day, by order of the Council of Ministers of the All-Russian Government, I was appointed Supreme Ruler.

2.—This day I have taken Chief Command of All the Power of the Land and Sea of Russia.

Admiral Kolchak.

Crowds of people were gathered before the posters—railway officials, peasants, workmen. There was no comment. The silence was tense, ominous. The illiterate knew by the expressions of those who were reading that something terrible had happened and every little while a workmen or a muzshik would ask one of the silent readers to explain to him the significance of the posters. And when the request was complied with—always in a low voice and always

very slowly, syllable for syllable, the listener, at the end of the reading, said never a word. Some remained motionless on the spot for a little while, arms hanging limp by their sides, as if paralyzed, others walked off immediately. And always, as he walked off, each man waved his hand in the air past his face once—a peculiar motion indicative of anger and despair.

"What do you think of this?" I asked a man who was walking off with a wave of the hand.

He gazed at me in surprise, repeated the peculiar movement, and turned away without a word.

"What do you think of it?" I asked another man.

He stopped, raised his hand to his hairy face and walked off.

"What do you think of it?" I asked a gigantic workman.

He appeared surprised at the purity of my Russian speech and looked at me suspiciously.

"Ach, you Americans, Americans!" he said at last, shaking his head from side to side, and spreading his hands out wide. "You sons of freedom, what can you be thinking of us Russian fools?"

"What do you suppose will happen now?" I asked him.

"Don't ask!" And he pointed to his heart. "There is a pain here that ties my tongue. So don't ask." And he took my hand in his tremendous paw and pressed it hard.

I repeated my question to a little red-haired, red-bearded muzshik. Pointing his finger to the sky, he muttered hoarsely:

"A storm is coming—a hurricane will sweep down! The land will run with blood!" And he waved his hand and walked off.

I thought of Voinoff—the Russian military priest whom I met on the way from Japan to Vladivostok, and for the first time I realized that he was not insane.

But Kolchak was not content, it seems, with the mere title of Supreme Ruler of All Russia. He immediately busied himself with proving to the people that he was perfectly familiar with the minutest attributes becoming to an autocrat and that he was bent on possessing himself of each and every one of them

And so, on the 30th of November, his Council of Ministers issued the following remarkable laws, in which even the most benighted of my readers will recognize the character of the government that made them:

"Paragraph 99 of the Criminal Code.—Any person guilty of an attempt on the life, health, freedom and general safety of the Supreme Ruler, or the violent deprivation of his or his ministers' power, or the realization of such power, shall suffer the punishment of death. By the word 'attempt' is understood the aiming at the aforementioned heavy crimes as well as their commission."

"Paragraph 100 of the Criminal Code.—Any person guilty of a violent attempt at the overthrow or change of the existing order of government, or at the separation or secession of any part of the Russian territory, shall suffer the punishment of death."

"Paragraph 103 of the Criminal Code.—Any person guilty of insulting the Supreme Ruler by word of mouth, in handwriting or in print, shall be punished by confinement in a prison."

"Paragraph 329 of the Code of Criminal Corrective Punishments.—Any person guilty of the conscious non-fulfillment of an order by the Supreme Ruler is subject to the punishment of being deprived of all rights and confinement to hard labor for a term of from 15-20 years."

Acting Minister of Justice, Starinkévitch,

Business Manager of the Council of Ministers and of the Supreme Ruler,

Telberg.

On the 3rd of December, the following order was issued by General Ivanoff-Rinoff, the Commander-in-chief of the Siberian armies:

"I hereby order you to maintain the sacred duty of allegiance to the All-Russian Ruler and his Council of Ministers, and to take immediate measures for guarding the peace and order of the country. (1). By the temporary prohibition of open-air assemblies. (2). Meetings in covered spaces to be held only by special permission. (3). To suppress in the

very germ any attempt at propaganda of any kind, either through speech or through print against the All-Russian Ruler and his Council of Ministers, and to deliver persons guilty of such attempts to a field court-martial."

On the 27th of November, four members of the Directorate, Avksientieff, Zenzinoff, Argunoff and Rogofsky were, by an order from Omsk, placed on a train and carried out of Siberia into China, convoyed by soldiers and officers of the Omsk garrison. "The English General Knox," so runs the laconic report, "detailed several English soldiers to act as guards for the prisoners."

The adherents of representative government in Siberia appeared a little puzzled at first regarding the part played by General Knox in the events at Omsk. But it was not long before congratulations arrived from the representatives of England to Admiral Kolchak. Then the Zemstvo officials thought they "knew the reason why," and said so in one of their resolutions, which I shall quote by-and-by.

Yes, autocracy had come to life in Siberia, and was working out in every detail a model of the Romanoff regime. Even the mock trial of the persons accused of arresting the members of the Directorate was not omitted. "On the 19th of November, there appeared before the Supreme Ruler Kolchak the officers of the local Omsk garrison and confessed their participation in the arrest, acknowledging their heavy crime in that, without any order by the highest civil and military authorities of Russia, they, of their own initiative, had caused the aforesaid arrest. They declared, however, that they were compelled to act as they did, under the pressure of wide civil and military circles. And they implored that they might be delivered over to the justice of the Field Court-Martial, considering it a happiness to die for the renaissance of Russia, the salvation of their country. In compliance with the order of the Supreme Ruler an investigation was instituted, with the result that the persons accused of the unauthorized arrest and detention of the members of the Directorate were delivered over to the

Supreme Court-Martial. . . ."

"The instigators of the change declared—not guilty."

"Omsk. An order was issued to declare to all parts of the army that Col. Volkoff, Ataman Krasilnikoff and Army Chief Kitanayeff, who had been tried by the Field Court-Martial, were found—not guilty." Thus runs the report in the monarchist People's Gazette of November 27th.

The politeness of the Zemstvo administration at this turn of affairs reminded me of the attitude of "the angels above human distresses." It is certain, however, that they understood the psychology of the Supreme Ruler, and knew that if they had been at this juncture otherwise than polite, they might "suffer the punishment of death" in anticipation of the laws of the 30th of November quoted above. And so on the 22nd of November, the Zemstvo Administration of the Maritime Province passed the following resolution:

"Three of the five members of the All-Russian Directorate, Avksientieff, Zenzinoff and Argunoff, have been arrested at Omsk, after which, with the consent of the chief of the council of ministers, Vologodsky, Kolchak has declared himself the Supreme Ruler of All Russias.

"Considering this attempt as a violent substitution of a single supreme ruler for the All Russian Directorate as a phenomenon of the same order with certain other phenomena, namely: the dispersal of the All Siberian Duma; the illegal discharge of the Siberian ministers appointed by that Duma; the arbitrary appointment of provincial commissars without the consent and even against the protests of the regular local governments; the systematic violation and gradual annihilation of state and municipal self-government; the Executive Council of the Maritime Province Zemstvo finds that the event of the 18th of November is the most prominent of this series of violations of the will of the people, and is convinced that the further progress of similar events will bring their instigators to the inevitable breakdown of their sinister plans and hopes for the restoration of the autocracy.

"In consideration of the aforesaid,

and protesting against the violence committed against the All-Russian Directorate, and rejecting every thought of the restoration of the autocracy in one form or another, be it resolved:

"To call upon the population of the Maritime Province to continue the difficult work of strengthening and developing the organs of local government with the consciousness that the creation of a firm national government can be brought about only by the will of the whole people through their elected representatives to a Constituent Assembly."

Such are the men whom Kolchak and Kolchak's adherents have branded as anarchists and Bolsheviks.

The Stupidities and Outrages of the New Regime.

I was sometimes amused, sometimes shocked by the utter stupidity of the new autocratic regime in Siberia. Instead of pacifying the population by a series of tolerant and benevolent actions, the new administration took every possible opportunity to announce its true character by irritating and frequently outrageous behavior. Let me cite a few examples:

Siberia was badly in need of sugar and the newly arrived Commissar, Zimmerman, asked me whether it would be possible to obtain sugar from the United States, saying that the Omsk Government would agree to sell it to the people at cost. I told him that so far as my knowledge of the situation went, I had no hopes of his being able to obtain sugar from the United States. I suggested however that the English might have a surplus on hand in their Straits Settlements. I was later informed by M. Tseklinsky, representative of the Omsk Ministry of Supplies, that he had obtained the needed quantity of sugar from the English at the extraordinarily low price of 5 1-2 cents a pound. There was one hitch however—Omsk had no money, and the English demanded a solid security. I told the War Trade Board how the matter stood—that Omsk would be willing to sell the sugar at cost but that the English demanded security. Our War Trade Board appeared anxious to take up the matter. Im-

mediately after that I was called north to deal with the "Death Train," the Japanese, Austrian prisoners, and a number of other things, and I do not know to this day whether America furnished the security or not. However, the sugar was obtained, and immediately after, the Omsk Government imposed upon it a tax of over three hundred per cent. What with the speculation that had now become quite a legitimate business, sugar in the Maritime Province soon sold at three and a half to five rubles a pound (a ruble was about 10 cents at the time,) and farther west it was much higher.

Entire Siberia groaned, and cursed the new administration.

In accordance with an arbitrary mandate from Omsk the ticket for the January election at Vladivostok was presented for the hated Commissar's approval. He struck off the names of a number of candidates. The effect of this action upon the population was painful to witness.

I made use of my evenings to mingle with the real people—small business men, workingmen, militiamen—who gathered in the little tea houses, in the dark and unpaved side-streets of Vladivostok. On all sides I saw the profound gloom with which this action of the Commissar had overcast the minds of the people, and the heavy sense of distress—of utter despair—with which their hearts were oppressed.

"Imagine yourself as having spent most of your life in a dark jail until you had grown old and gray," said a big bear of a Russian, with a tremendous growth of beard, as he sat at tea in his heavy sheepskin overcoat and cap. "Imagine that the only thing which sustained you throughout your years of suffering was the undying hope of freedom. And then one day the walls of your prison are burst asunder—a flood of light pours in upon you—your shackles disappear and you are free—free—free! The hot blood courses through your veins, you are young again, and happy, and your heart beats fast and strong. Suddenly a terrible executioner sweeps down upon you, who shackles your hands and feet with heavy iron chains and throws you into a dark dungeon to

die! Death is all that is left to us Russians now! We can not speak, we can not write, we can not assemble, we can not vote. We are being murdered."

Other guests gathered around our table and listened attentively, now and then interrupting the speaker by a word of approval.

"But why do you say you can not vote?" I objected. "What will keep you from voting in the coming election?"

"Vote? For whom? The candidates whom we have selected and whom we have entrusted with our fortunes have been stricken off the ballot by a stranger whom we do not know and whom we do not trust, and who is here for the avowed purpose of depriving us of our rights. No, dear friend, we have nobody now to vote for, and we aren't going to vote."

"Perhaps you personally aren't going to vote, but you can't speak for the rest of the people."

The little audience laughed good-naturedly at my innocence.

"Nobody but a few speculators and monarchists are going to the polls. Those who love Russia will stay at home," they said.

To my utmost surprise the people of Vladivostok really did stay at home on election day; although 35,000 votes had been cast in the previous election, only 4000 were cast this year.

And yet there was no pre-election campaigning in Vladivostok that one could see—on the surface.

In the meantime more important events were taking place at Omsk. Reports were continually arriving about arrests of people holding most moderate political opinions. The laws passed by the Kolchak Ministry the 30th of November were being put in force. Every known or suspected malcontent was branded as a Bolshevik and arrested accordingly. The members of the Russian Constituent Assembly were thrown into jail as a matter of course. The Chapter of Oppression and Repression was rapidly reaching its climax.

On December 23rd, the following telegram was received from the Omsk Business Manager of the Ministry of the Interior by General Hor-

vath, now the supreme delegate for the Far East:

"On the night of December 21st, disorders took place in Omsk. A crowd of workers at Kulomzino station, which is six versts distant from Omsk, rebelled and created disturbances. Several hundred soldiers attacked the Omsk prison, disarmed the guard, and freed about 200 prisoners, including Bolsheviks and members of the Constituent Assembly. The disorders were suppressed by 8 a.m. Some of the men attacking the prison were arrested, and the others dispersed. They are being located, as well as the liberated prisoners. A part of the latter have been re-arrested. The rebellion in Kulomzino has been suppressed by the troops sent out from Omsk. The city garrison is taking quick and decisive steps to control the disorders."

About the same time General Romanovsky received the following telegram from Omsk:

"The Bolshevik propaganda has increased during the last few days, —on the night of December 22nd, a group of disarmed workingmen, Bolsheviks and other dark elements, liberated the prisoners and attempted to create disturbances in military parts of the city, capturing temporarily the railroad station Kulomzino and disarming the railroad militia. Troops were called in who wiped out the rioters and order was re-established in the city and its surroundings."

"The Supreme Ruler issues this information in order to put a stop to all provocative rumors circulated by traitors to their country. He has ordered the merciless execution of all persons who attempted to create disturbances."

I have talked with a number of eye-witnesses respecting this "merciless execution." The simple words of the telegram do not begin to tell the story. The reader may know that the Omsk district is one of the coldest inhabited spots of the world. The December of 1918, was one of the coldest on record. Kolchak's men made use of this fact; they stripped the rebels and drove them naked through the streets until in agony they confessed the names and hiding-places of their leaders.

They were then placed in rows and shot, and their frozen bodies piled into freight cars. Protruding arms and legs were severed with a blow of the axe. The cars were pulled out of town and the bodies dumped in heaps to wait for the spring.

Interference With Last Remnants of Representative Government.

Mere instinct should dictate to the stupidest animal of a man, after the election events at Vladivostok, to abstain from harrowing the outraged feelings of the voters any further. But simply to irritate the population did not seem sufficient to the Kolchak Commissar. He was bent upon infuriating it. About the middle of January, 1919, he informed the shrewd M. Agareff, Mayor of Vladivostok, that he had reviewed the election returns and found everything in connection with the recent balloting regular and proper. He found, however, that from a legal standpoint it was impossible for him to admit two of the newly elected delegates to the City Council, namely Nikiforoff and Usoff, of ballot No. 8, because of their Bolshevik sympathies.

It seems then that even with less than one-eighth of the voters participating in the election, two men objectionable to the Kolchak regime did manage to slip in. The Commissar's idea of "Bolshevik sympathies" simply meant that the men in question had no sympathy for Kolchak.

Then followed a sharp exchange of letters between the City Mayor and Kolchak's representative. Here are a couple of bright examples, as quoted in the Vladivostok newspapers. The first is from the Mayor and is addressed to the Commissar:

"In reply to your letter, I have the honor to inform you that in the matter of convoking the new City Duma, I know my duty. Regarding the removal of the members and candidates who were elected on Ticket No. 8, I regret to inform you that this demand, since it is beyond your authority, can not be entertained by me nor will any such action be taken."

In the same paper the Commissar's reply is published as follows:

"In accordance with the temporary regulations for the District and County Commissars concerning the removal of representatives of anti-governmental political parties from governmental agencies, I request you, at the first meeting of the new Duma, to bring up for discussion the question of the exclusion of the members of the new Duma elected from List No. 8.

"In connection with this I find it superfluous to tell you that I not only know what my duties are but also what your are. Therefore your reference to my competency in your letter No. 84, was misplaced."

A convention of representatives of Siberian Zemstvos and City Councils met at Vladivostok on January 1st, 1919, for the purpose of devising ways and means for the economic organization of the country. Amid the vortex of universal destruction they were attempting to rescue the farm, the fishery and the school as material for the building of a new nation. At the opening of the session M. Medviedyeff, the chairman of the Zemstvo Executive Council of of the Maritime Province, read two telegrams just received from the Kolchak Government at Omsk and signed by the Acting Minister of the Interior. One of the telegrams read:

"I forbid your discussing questions of the construction of government and other political questions of a similar character."

The other forbade the discussion of any reports by the delegates, unless "all political questions are eliminated from the reports."

The senseless insult so gratuitously thrown into the midst of a gathering which consisted of the most politically moderate and certainly the most enlightened elements of Siberia, called forth the reaction which might have been expected. The convention, in reply to the telegrams, passed a number of resolutions opposing the government of Kolchak as illegal and arbitrary, and expressing its allegiance to the regularly elected authorities of the Zemstvos and municipalities.

"The Conference," says one resolu-

tion, "sees the hopelessness of regulating and directing a reconstruction of the disordered economic life in view of the prevailing political tendency to abridge the people's rights."

"The Conference can not be silent concerning the sad results of the interference of foreign forces, aiding the influence of small groups, which have no support from the masses of population.

"Such action can only help to bring back Bolshevism and to delay the moment of the country's reunion. Taking this into consideration, the Conference finds that the only way out of this situation is to re-establish order on a basis of the laws issued by the Russian Temporary Government of 1917, and to call in the nearest future the All-Siberian Constituent Assembly."

Chairman Medviedyeff, in summing up the Conference, said, "The principal and definite task of the Conference is to form a union. Only by a full union of representative agencies can Russia be saved. And we believe that the City and Zemstvo governments will save Russia. We hope that our example will be followed, and that an All-Siberian Conference will soon be called."

Reign of Lawlessness Under Kolchak.

Open arrests and executions and covert official kidnappings and murders were tearing the life of Siberia into a thousand shreds in the month of January, 1919. A person had but to be suspected of disagreeing with the aims or methods of the Kolchak regime to be proclaimed a Bolshevik, and from that time on his life was in imminent danger.

On January 20th, M. Agareff, the City Mayor of Vladivostok, was returning late at night from a meeting of the Convention of the Siberian Zemstvos in the company of a friend. They were walking along the dark Pushkinskaya, when they noticed that they were closely followed by two men. Suddenly their pursuers fired at them from behind. But the 15 shots all missed aim, except insofar as they greatly increased the hatred of the population of the dastardly attempt—the government at Omsk.

A day or two later I happened to speak of this incident to a Russian army officer.

"Agareff? That Bolshevik? He should have been killed long ago!" was his comment.

I travelled in a railway coupe with a Cossack officer and his adjutant. We drank tea, and smoked and talked. The Cossacks were reciting their exploits on the eastern front in the late war. I touched on the topic of the arrest of the members of the Constituent Assembly at Omsk.

"I know you Americans imagine that there is a difference between ordinary Bolsheviks and those dogs. Let me tell you—they are all one gang, and there is only one thing to do with them—to shoot them dead!"

Eight members of the Constituent Assembly did indeed perish at Omsk late in December or early in January. The circumstances connected with their death were kept a deep secret by the Omsk Government, but the secret leaked out gradually. One of the eight men, Fomin, had made a great name for himself as a promoter of the Russian Co-operative Societies.

One day I found the railway employees at Nikolsk in a disturbed state of mind. I inquired what was the matter. A big, burly Russian, a freight-yard hand, speaking between compressed teeth, and in a voice husky with pent-up emotion, told me that a cold-blooded murder had taken place there only the day before. A workingman who had on several occasions given rather free expression to his opposition to the new regime, was informed by his fellows in the railway shops that some Cossacks were looking for him. He escaped through a window, ran across the railway bed, and began to climb the fence which separated the railway premises from the fields. Here his pursuers caught up with him. One of them struck him across the shoulders with his sabre. The man, bleeding profusely, managed to run some distance along the road which led to the town, but soon fell exhausted and died from loss of blood. He left a widow and five children.

When the man had finished his story he showed me his gigantic

clenched fist and, speaking very, very slowly, with long intervals of silence between the words, he hissed between his teeth:

"And do you think the God of vengeance will sleep forever? No, no! A thousand times no!"

I visited the city of —* a few days later. The military commandant of the town, an excellent Russian, complained to me that in a little while it would be impossible for him to maintain peace. The stupid outrages of some people, he said, were forcing his peaceful population to become Bolsheviks. Five citizens had been kidnapped a few days before, and their dead bodies discovered by a posse of citizens in the brushwood, at a little distance from the town.

"Do you know who murdered them?" I asked.

"Of course I do."

"Have you had the murderers arrested?"

He looked at me amazed, then tapped me on the shoulder.

"The Lord is high above, and the Tsar is far away," he replied meaningly.

"Were the murdered men Bolsheviks?"

"Whoever is murdered nowadays is a Bolshevik," he explained.

A military hospital at —* was congested in the extreme by the presence of a number of patients who had been brought there on a prison-train. Typhus had broken out. There was no way of controlling the situation except to relieve the crowding by a prompt discharge of the convalescents. It was important, however, to keep them in quarantine for a certain length of time; and, as they were, from a Russian official standpoint, prisoners, upon being discharged they had to have a convoy, a jail and a guard. I managed to obtain some barracks that might serve both as a quarantine and a prison. But I had neither convoy nor

guard. The only military force available were cavalry soldiers, and I applied to their chief—a beautiful young fellow, dressed up in the Christmas-tree fashion of the Russian cavalry officer of the old regime. He refused at first, saying that it did not behoove the cavalry to serve as convoys or guards. I explained to him the danger to the whole population from the crowding in the hospital, and, by appealing to his patriotism, at last obtained his consent.

"But who are these prisoners?" he asked.

I explained again. There were about 600 of them, men, women and children. About 50 were accused of participation in the Bolshevik activities of European Russia. About 25 were petty civil offenders. The rest were perfectly innocent people who had been brought to town along with the prisoners through the prodigious incompetence of certain officials.

The officer suddenly became very eager.

"Doctor," he exclaimed with genuine enthusiasm, "believe me, it is best to be on the safe side. I'll tell you what I am going to do, because I see that you are a real American, and I like you. Let me have the entire damned lot of those 600 dogs, and if you only say the word, you have my assurance that within 24 hours there will be neither sick nor well among them!"

I explained that what I wanted was not an execution but a quarantine; and that with respect to the course of justice, I should be only too glad if he would institute an investigation. It would relieve me of a great responsibility and the Red Cross of great expense.

"Do you Americans stand up for the Bolsheviks?" he asked.

I told him that I had nothing to do with Russian political differences, that I merely wished to prevent, if possible, an epidemic of typhus in Siberia.

He shook his head sadly.

"The only way to prevent trouble is to put such people beneath the ground."

The military commandant of the city overheard our conversation and later on, at dinner, remarked:

*I am compelled to omit here names of towns and persons. The latter would certainly be victimized if this article ever reached the Kolchak officials. I shall be glad, however, to give names and places to responsible persons.

"With such an attitude on the part of the officers, what can you expect? In a few weeks they will convert my entire population into a roaring, raging Bolshevik mob."

The physician-in-chief of the stricken hospital, an old man, who had spent most of his life in military service, complained to me later that he was in a most precarious situation. He was no more of a Bolshevik than the Supreme Ruler himself, but rumors had reached him that he was being accused by some officials of sympathy with the Bolsheviks.

"My only crime is that there are a few Bolsheviks in my hospital. But as a physician, you know it yourself, I can not very well kill them off."

The commandant told me that the old man was indeed unfavorably talked about in military circles, and for that very reason. "I wouldn't be at all surprised if he were found murdered one fine morning."

"But who would murder him, that kind-hearted, innocent old doctor?"

"Some young officer or other. My officers are very zealous fellows," he said with a sneer.

Kolchak, the Allies and the Siberian People.

All through December, January and February, Kolchak was issuing call after call for officers—for officers of this, that and the other year. I naturally wondered why he did not ask for men. The answer came simply at a little tea-house one evening.

"If Kolchak would only issue a call for a general draft," said a Russian whom I knew quite well, "that would indeed be the end of him. But the devil knows his own game. Kolchak is very well aware that no sooner will any considerable number of the people feel the weight of the rifles in their hands, than his entire diabolical machinery, together with himself, will go up in a cloud of smoke."

In the town of —* I had need one day for a force of ninety Russian soldiers. I applied to General B.

"Ninety men! he exclaimed. "Where am I going to get them?"

"You have two regiments here."

"True. Two of the most distinguished regiments of the Russian army. One of them consists of 12 officers and 7 men and the other of 9 officers and 10 men—the crack regiments of the great army that is going to save our Holy Russia."

"Is that the entire force at your command?"

"No. That is what I am fond of calling my 'ideal' force. But I have a real force, too, and my real force is entirely at your disposal. It consists of two adjutants, two bookkeepers and a typewriter girl. You are welcome to make use of it."

The question interested me. For the monarchist papers in Siberia were now reporting great victories in the direction of Perm and towards Samara. I inquired among the "faithful" as to the extent of Kolchak's army. It was true, they said, that his legions consisted mainly of officers. But the Lord was on his side, and he was receiving a great deal of "moral" support from the Japanese, the English and even the French.

And indeed, on January 21st, Kolchak's telegraph agency heralded the following messages:

"The British Government has expressed through Sir Charles Elliot, British High Commissioner, its great sympathy and interest in the efforts of the Kolchak administration to establish a free government in Russia on the firm basis of public trust."

"The French Government, through the French High Commissioner, M. Egnot, expresses its great pleasure in the co-operation between the Ekaterinodar Central Government (Gen. Denikin's) and the Kolchak Government, and remarks that the appointment of Sazonoff as the joint Minister of Foreign Affairs has served to strengthen the Kolchak Government, thus leading to a recognition of Kolchak's supreme power."

Sazonoff, by the way, had been one of the mainstays of the Ministry of Tsar Nicholas.

It is not necessary to expatiate on the "moral" and other assistance which Japan has rendered Kolchak. The world is too well aware of the nature of Japan's love for Russia. The proof of the love for the pud-

ding is, after all, in the eating of it.

The Czecho-slovak and American policies presented a decided contrast to those of the other Allies.

On November 21st, three days after Kolchak's coup d'etat, the following resolution was passed by the Czecho-slovak National Council:

"The Russian Division of the Czecho-slovak National Council, in order to put a stop to conjectures respecting its attitude toward current events, hereby declares:

"That the Czecho-slovak army, which is fighting for the ideals of liberty and the self-government of nations, can not and will not co-operate or sympathize with a violent change which is perpendicularly opposed to such ideals. The change of the 18th of November, at Omsk, has subverted the very foundation of that principle of law and order which must be the beginning of every government."

The reader will remember it was proposed, largely through the efforts of President Wilson, to invite representatives of all the Russian political factions, including the Soviet Republic of Central Russia, to a conference at Prince's Island. Kolchak took fright at this, and addressed a message to his army, in which he declared his uncompromising attitude—the Russian people would not deign, he said, to treat with infidels and outcasts—the mission of the army was to rescue the Holy Religion—to purge the land . . . and so forth. Anyone acquainted with the language of the Black Hundred of Imperial Russia can easily imagine the rest.

General Graves thereupon expressed the opinion that if Siberia were to be adequately represented at Prince's Island, those groups of the Siberian population who considered the Kolchak Government illegally organized, must be allowed to send delegates as well as the Kolchak Government itself.

The Chief of the A. E. F. had open eyes. He refused to allow his troops to do any fighting for Kolchak, or even to hunt Bolsheviks, and kept the American soldiers consistently in the east of Siberia. Moreover, he thought it was wrong to brand all the dissatisfied political elements as Bolsheviks. Whenever

reports came in of projected murders of real or alleged Bolsheviks by Cossack free-booters, General Graves sent American soldiers to intercede in behalf of the victims. If executions did take place, as in Habarovsk, it was in spite of the intervention of American troops.

Under these circumstances it was not surprising that Kolchak's press agencies, now began to speak of President Wilson as a dreamer and a Utopian. The fact is that Kolchak had ceased to look to America for support in his autocratic ambitions. But he did not need it. He had the substantial co-operation of England and of Japan and even of democratic France.

I now asked a leading Zemstvo official what their course of action would be if the demolition of representative government in Siberia should proceed still further.

"It can not proceed further," was the disheartened reply. "The process is complete. Our press is muzzled. We are sure to be murdered if we speak aloud. Perhaps you can think of something? You Americans have had plenty of leisure to think."

I was a little discomfited by the last remark.

"You refer, of course, to our policy of non-interference," I replied. "But you know perfectly well that it is not our business to interfere in your family quarrels."

"No. Your business is simply to sit and witness the interesting spectacle of an autocracy being fastened upon Siberia. And how we welcomed your coming here! You remember?—"

I remembered—the enthusiasm for America and everything American—their eagerness to imitate our ways and methods—their dream of constructing a United States of Russia cast in the mold of the United States of America.

"So you think we had better get out of here?"

"Well, the fact is," he said, "that left to themselves the Russian people could cope with Kolchak very easily indeed. You know, they coped with Nicholas. But they can hardly start a row while their house is full of guests. It wouldn't be polite."

JOSHUA ROSETT.

Anti-Bolsheviks and Mr. Spargo

ON page 199 of his book on Bolshevism, discussing the period of Kerensky, Mr. Spargo says that "no other government was possible for Russia except a strong despotism." Then his next chapter—the one in which he proves the Bolsheviks supremely and horribly wrong—is headed *The Bolshevik War Against Democracy*. Mr. Spargo's view is that Russia should have a despotism but that it should be a despotism organized democratically. Lenin found it difficult to fill this prescription.

He made a sort of start at it, though. On page 155 Mr. Spargo says that "Lenin proposed to give the sole control of Russia into the hands of not more than 200,000 workers." A despotism by 200,000 workers is certainly 200,000 times more democratic than a despotism by one man—which is the customary sense of the word despotism. Still, it does seem a bit exclusive; and it also seems impossible and incredible. Mr. Spargo, therefore, on page 211, quotes Lenin's own words about it. Lenin says:

"Just as 150,000 lordly landowners under Tsarism dominated the 130,000,000 of Russian peasants, so 200,000 members of the Bolshevik party are imposing their proletarian will on the mass—but this time in the interest of the latter."

Such is one of Lenin's sentences. But the subject is large. Lenin gave it more than one sentence. He gave it numerous sentences (unquoted by Mr. Spargo) in his principal work on such matters—the pamphlet written before the Bolshevik Revolution under the title *Can the Bolsheviks Hold the Government Power?*

In this pamphlet Lenin speaks of the well known fact that in every country the voters of any political party are many times more numerous than the party-members. He alludes to the evidence of this fact in elections recently held in Petrograd. On that evidence, after calculating the Bolshevik party strength as 240,000, he calculates the Bolshevik voting strength as 1,000,000; and he says: "Here we have already a

State Apparatus of 1,000,000 people faithful to the Socialist State."

He adds: "Not only this, but we have a method by which at one blow we can increase our State Apparatus ten-fold—a method which not a single capitalistic state has ever had, or could ever have, at its disposal—namely, the summoning of the laboring, the summoning of the poor, to the everyday work of managing the State."

He adds later: "To govern the State in such a spirit (the spirit of benefit for the mass) we can at once summon a Government Apparatus of 10,000,000, if not of 20,000,000, people; and this apparatus we, and we alone, can create; because we are assured of the most complete and unlimited sympathy by the gigantic majority of the population."

There is a certain gap between this statement by Lenin and Mr. Spargo's statement that Lenin proposed to give the "sole control" of Russia to 200,000 persons. Mr. Spargo quotes the sentence about the "200,000." He does not quote the sentence about the "10,000,000 if not 20,000,000." Perhaps Lenin's complete works are not handed to Mr. Spargo by the Russian groups whose purposes in Russia are advanced by Mr. Spargo's writings.

Perhaps, also, other information is not handed to him. On page 216 of his book, Mr. Spargo says: "When they (the Bolsheviks) came into power they suppressed all non-Bolshevik papers in a manner differing not at all from that of the Tsar's regime, forcing the other socialist parties and groups to resort to pre-revolution underground methods." Mr. Spargo says: "when they came into power." Mr. Spargo says: "all non-Bolshevik papers." Yet in May of 1918, six months later, the following newspapers were running in Moscow:

Vechernee Vremia, Independent; Rane Utro and Zaria Rossii, organs of the business interests; Vpered, Menshevik; Svobodnaya Rossiya, Liberal Cadet; Nashe Slovo, Conservative Cadet; Vlast Naroda, Co-operative, Contributed to by Socialists-

Revolutionists of the Right.

Also running were various non-Bolshevik magazines, including the *Novi Satirikon*. In January of 1918, the *Novi Satirikon* cartooned Lenin as Russia's undertaker, with the caption "Third-Class Funerals, Lenin and Co." In May of 1918, the *Novi Satirikon* was still cartooning Lenin. In that month it drew him presenting a large platter to the Russian workingman. On the platter lies a little flower—the flower of the season—a carnation. The workingman says: "But if only there was a little garniture of potatoes!"

In Petrograd, in May of 1918, the following newspapers were running: *Nash Viek*, Cadet; *Dielo Narodnoe*, Socialist-Revolutionist of the Right; *Znamia Truda*, Socialist-Revolutionist of the Left.

In 1917, under Kerensky, the Bolshevik party paper *Pravda* was raided and its print-shop wrecked. The Bolsheviks were trying not merely to criticize the Kerensky administration but to utterly destroy the Kerensky idea of the State. It was inevitable that they should be roughly handled. Mr. Spargo, on page 198 of his book, discussing the events of that time, says without disapproval: "Some of the Bolshevik papers were suppressed."

But, similarly, under Lenin, if any paper tried not merely to criticize the Lenin administration but to utterly destroy the Bolshevik Soviet idea of the State, its editor was likely to find his publishing life quite frequently interrupted. Nevertheless, in spite of suppressions, there was an incessant printing of non-Bolshevik and of anti-Bolshevik news and editorials and cartoons down to the middle of 1918. Mr. Spargo himself would probably be willing to regard as non-Bolshevik the character-sketch of Trotsky which appeared in the magazine called *Sinil Journal* in February of 1918, describing Trotsky as "this adventurer, this man without a fatherland and without a father, this parody of Robespierre, this bloody clown."

Then, with the middle of 1918, the armed open attack of the Socialist-Revolutionists on the Bolshevik Government brought Soviet Russia to a condition of open acute civil war. Is

there any government in the world that permits pro-enemy papers to be printed within its territory during a civil war? Certainly no such government has ever been reported in Russia.

In the Russian city of Cheliabinsk, in September of 1918, the Socialists-Revolutionist paper *The Rule of the People* was reported closed down by the Cadets. In the same month, in Samara, the Cadet paper, *The Volga Day* was reported closed down by the Socialists-Revolutionists. Kolchak today in Siberia has gagged and gassed the whole Siberian press, as can be seen by his anti-civil-liberty legislation quoted elsewhere in this issue of the *New Republic* by Dr. Rosett. Dr. Rosett reports also personally that the Kolchak authorities closed down a paper in Vladivostok simply for carrying the standard line which for decades has been carried by every Socialist paper in the world—"Workingmen of all countries, unite!"

In Soviet Russia, after the middle of 1918, the editor of an anti-Soviet paper was likely to find his publishing life absolutely stopped. An American lawyer who was representing an American mission in Soviet Russia in July of 1918, writes to me to say that in that month "most of the opposition papers were suppressed." But is it not strange? Mr. Spargo gives the reader the distinct impression that non-Bolshevik papers were all underground just about as soon as Lenin had a chance to see them. Yet they are still exhibiting themselves openly and have to be driven underground some more, after eight months of Lenin's rule. And there is something stranger still.

On page 221, in small type, in a quotation from Inna Rakitnikov, we learn that when the paper of the Central Committee of the Socialists-Revolutionists—Lenin's chief enemies—was suppressed, the result of the suppression was simply that the paper continued to come out just exactly as before, "only changing its name." Further, on page 222, when Mr. Spargo quotes an editorial from the Bolshevik paper *Pravda* saying that all journals of the enemies of the Bolshevik Government must be destroyed, he gives us the date of the

editorial scrupulously. It is in a foot-note. It is July 5, 1918, in the Civil War. Down to that time, according to Mr. Spargo himself, in unemphasized small type and foot-notes, there were non-Bolshevist papers still existing and still rousing Pravda to demands for their suppression.

Mr. Spargo's favorite method of fighting Bolshevism is to make a loud noise against some wickedness of the Bolsheviks and then to protect himself by making a very tiny and almost inaudible noise proving that the loud noise was far too loud.

One of his tiny noises is on page 256, where in a general and judicial manner he says: "There is really not much to choose between the ways of Stolypin and Von Plehve and those of the Lenin-Trotsky rule." The corresponding loud noise is on the previous page where he dwells on the savagery of the Bolsheviks and then specifically and aggressively says:

"The death penalty was never inflicted for civil crimes under the late Tsar. It was never inflicted for political offences. Only rarely was it inflicted for murder."

Here indeed is mystical theoretical Holy Russia, reverently revived by a distinguished Socialist. The actual Russia was once more realistically known. It still lives for us in thousands of documents getting slightly dusty now in the days of Nicholas, the Martyr. Prince Kropotkin's book on The Terror of Russia was written in the days of Nicholas the Murderer. It describes wholesale murders promiscuously accomplished; and, on the point of deliberate legalized capital punishment it says:

"Under the military law now in action in most of Russian territory, the smallest agrarian disorders, and even setting fire to a landlord's barn or stack, are treated as implying the death penalty."

In the Russian Duma, in 1906, General Kouzmin Karavaeff, a military procureur, a deputy of the conservative Right, speaking of certain repressions, said:

"Over 600 men were during the last four months hanged or shot or otherwise deprived of life by most horrible methods without trials or

after mock trials. This figure is appalling, and it shows us once more that the chief motive of capital punishment here in Russia is sanguinary vengeance."

Such was the Tsar. Mr. Spargo washes the Tsar, and throws the water on the Bolsheviks. He says, on page 255, that "the Bolsheviks introduced hanging and flogging in public for petty civil crimes. He proves this charge by one quotation from the Soviet Government's official paper, Izvestia. He quotes:

"Two village robbers were condemned to death. All the people of Semenovskaya and the surrounding communes were invited to the ceremony. On July 6, at mid-day, a great crowd of interested spectators arrived at the village of Loupia. The organizers of the execution gave to each of the bystanders the opportunity of flogging the condemned to obtain from them supplementary confessions. The number of blows was unlimited. Then a vote of the spectators was taken as to the method of execution. The majority was for hanging. In order that the spectacle could be easily seen, the spectators were ranged in three ranks. The first row sat down, the second row rested on the knee, and the third stood up."

Such is Mr. Spargo's quotation. It is from an article in column seven of page five of Izvestia of July 28, 1918. Mr. Spargo was able to quote this article almost entire. He left out only the headline, the introductory sentence, and a comment by the editor of Izvestia.

The headline is "A Nightmare." The introductory sentence is: "The paper of the Solvichegodsky Soviet—the Free Land—describes a nightmare-like event of an organized lynching in the village of Loupia." The comment by the editor of Izvestia, as the story of the lynching proceeds, is: "Horrible."

Headline, introductory sentence, and comment—all together—are only a few words. Why did Mr. Spargo—or why did his informant—leave them out? Why is a lynching by peasants manufactured into a law by Lenin? Mr. Spargo learns of the Loupia affair only from an article in Izvestia. That article reports the af-

fair as a lawless lynching by an organized mob and condemns it. Mr. Spargo, or Mr. Spargo's informant, by suppressing part of the article, reports the affair as an act of Bolshevik general law and of Bolshevik immediate governmental administration. Why?

Why—more generally—can not Mr. Spargo content himself with the executions actually ordered and actually accomplished by the Bolshevik government, really governmentally, and thoroughly provable out of Izvestia? Izvestia does not try to conceal the Bolshevik Terror from Mr. Spargo. On September 7, 1918, for instance, the Civil War and the Terror being in full course, Izvestia curtly says: "Astrakhan, September 5. On the night of September 4, an illegal meeting of Right Socialists-Revolutionists was discovered. After the counter-revolutionary purpose of the meeting was disclosed, four of them were shot. Besides this, five White Guards were shot."

Equally curtly, in the same issue, Izvestia also says:

"Yaroslav, September 5. By order of the Provincial Extraordinary Commission, eighteen White Guards were shot."

Again, in the same issue, Izvestia gives painstaking publicity to a murderous order by the Chairman of the Extraordinary Commission for Combating the Counter-Revolution at the Front—an order saying that the clergy in certain districts are acting as "police-dogs" for the White Guards and that the Chairman therefore commands all Extraordinary Commissions at the Front to watch all clergymen especially carefully and to "shoot any of them who come out by word or deed against the Soviet Government." "By word!"

Also, and still in the same issue, Izvestia says that in Petrograd twenty-nine "Counter-Revolutionaries," including certain former Tsaristic officials, named, have been shot in answer to the attack on Comrade Lenin and in answer to the murder of Comrade Uritsky, by order of "The Collegium of the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission" and "as an act of Red Terror."

Izvestia quite specializes on proving the ruthlessness of the Bolshevik

Government toward its political opponents. Yet it also touches sometimes on ordinary criminology. In the issue of July 28, for instance, in the same issue, out of which Mr. Spargo got the story of the lynching at Loupia, and on the same page with that story, and in the same column with it, and not three inches from it, there is an article headed A New Punishment. It says:

"The Izvestia of the Voronezh Soviet describes a new and original punishment applied in the Voronezh Revolutionary Tribunal, which consists of the following:

"One guilty of a crime is not placed in prison after the decision of the court but is set free with a warning that if he is again found guilty of another crime, even of an insignificant one, he will have to serve the combined sentences for both crimes, for the present one and for the previous one together."

"The Tribunal has already passed several such sentences. It is said that such sentences have a great moral influence on the criminals."

This article might seem to indicate that the Bolsheviks are capable of making a sort of distinction between (a) executing "Counter-Revolutionaries" in a struggle for the control of the State and (b) administering ordinary civil and criminal justice. This article might also seem to indicate that some Bolsheviks—at least in Voronezh—are developing a kind of criminology regarded as highly creditable and humanitarian in America. Mr. Spargo did not find this article. It slipped from under his thumb—or his informant's thumb.

Mr. Spargo's greatest omission, however, in his book on Bolshevism, is anti-Bolshevism. Our practical problem in Russia is: Shall we support the anti-Bolshevik Governments in Russia against the Bolshevik one? The Bolshevik one is anti-democratic and terroristic. Mr. Spargo does not succeed in proving that Lenin objects to admitting more than 200,000 persons to the "strong despotism" which Lenin, along with Mr. Spargo, succeed in "proving that the supreme Bolshevik authorities spend their time devising laws for torturing robbers. But Mr. Spargo does

indeed know, and everybody knows, and the Bolshevik Government clamorously claims, that the Bolshevik method is a method which excludes a great many Russians from all participation in the Government of their country and which resorts to a ruthless Mass-Terror whenever necessary. But what of the anti-Bolsheviks?

Dr. John Rickman, of the English Society of Friends, War Victims' Relief Committee, in 1916 and in 1917 and in 1918, worked in towns and in the town of Buzuluk, for instance; he saw the anti-Bolshevik Cossacks. He saw them driving through the streets with a cart-load of headless bodies. He says that the peasants remarked that "those bodies were our sons: they joined the Red Guard to defend the Revolution." He says that this Terror by the anti-Bolsheviks preceded the Red Terror. He says that in the Buzuluk Department, during this preceding anti-Bolshevik Terror, there were orders issued that "all members of the Soviet and all men in the Red Guard were to be shot." He says that in the town of Buzuluk, an election was then held "on a limited franchise" and that "candidates for office were required to have the signature on their papers of certain persons who had held office under the old regime (that is, under the Tsar.*)" He says that a Council was thus elected "which bore a close resemblance to that which had existed in 1916" under the Tsar. He says that the comment of people on the street was "This is too reactionary for us."

Such were the Councils, such the local governments, which came numerously into existence in the valley of the Volga during the first great revolt against the Bolshevik Government in the middle of 1918. Mr. Spargo, on page 253 of his book, mentions that revolt in one of its great outbreaks in the town of Jaroslav. He mentions it only to denounce the anti-democracy and terrorism of the Bolsheviks.

The largest anti-Bolshevik Government in Russia today is the government of Kolchak. Will Mr. Spargo claim that Kolchak has ever had 200,000 party-members—or 100,000

—or 10,000—who have ever elected him to his present office, or to anything? Will Mr. Spargo claim that Kolchak fosters civil liberty and the freedom of the press? Will Mr. Spargo claim that Kolchak did not imprison, and that Kolchak's officers did not assassinate, an unarmed group of prominent anti-Bolsheviks, members of the All-Russian Constituent Assembly, for engaging in the primary activity of democratic citizenship—"party politics?"

Yet Mr. Spargo can write to the pro-Kolchak propagandist magazine in the United States—the magazine called *Struggling Russia*—and can say:

"You are doing a big thing—bigger for America than for Russia. You are giving us exactly what is needed: carefully tested authoritative documentary evidence."

The evidence printed in *Struggling Russia* has never included one word exposing the anti-democracy and the terrorism of Kolchak. Mr. Spargo's book is full of similar evidence, similarly tested.

Mr. Spargo has been led to write a book rousing the reader to fury against the Bolsheviks, both for the terrible things they have done and for terrible things they have not done, and rousing the reader to no fury at all against the equally murderous anti-Bolsheviks who in practice are the governing alternatives to the Bolsheviks. Mr. Spargo has been led to write a book inclining the reader toward intervention in Russia to destroy the arbitrary dictatorship of a certain set of people on the necessary behalf of the equally arbitrary dictatorships of certain other sets of people. Mr. Spargo has been led to write a book defying and deluding the American people's primary national instinct of non-participation in the quarrels of anti-democrats abroad.

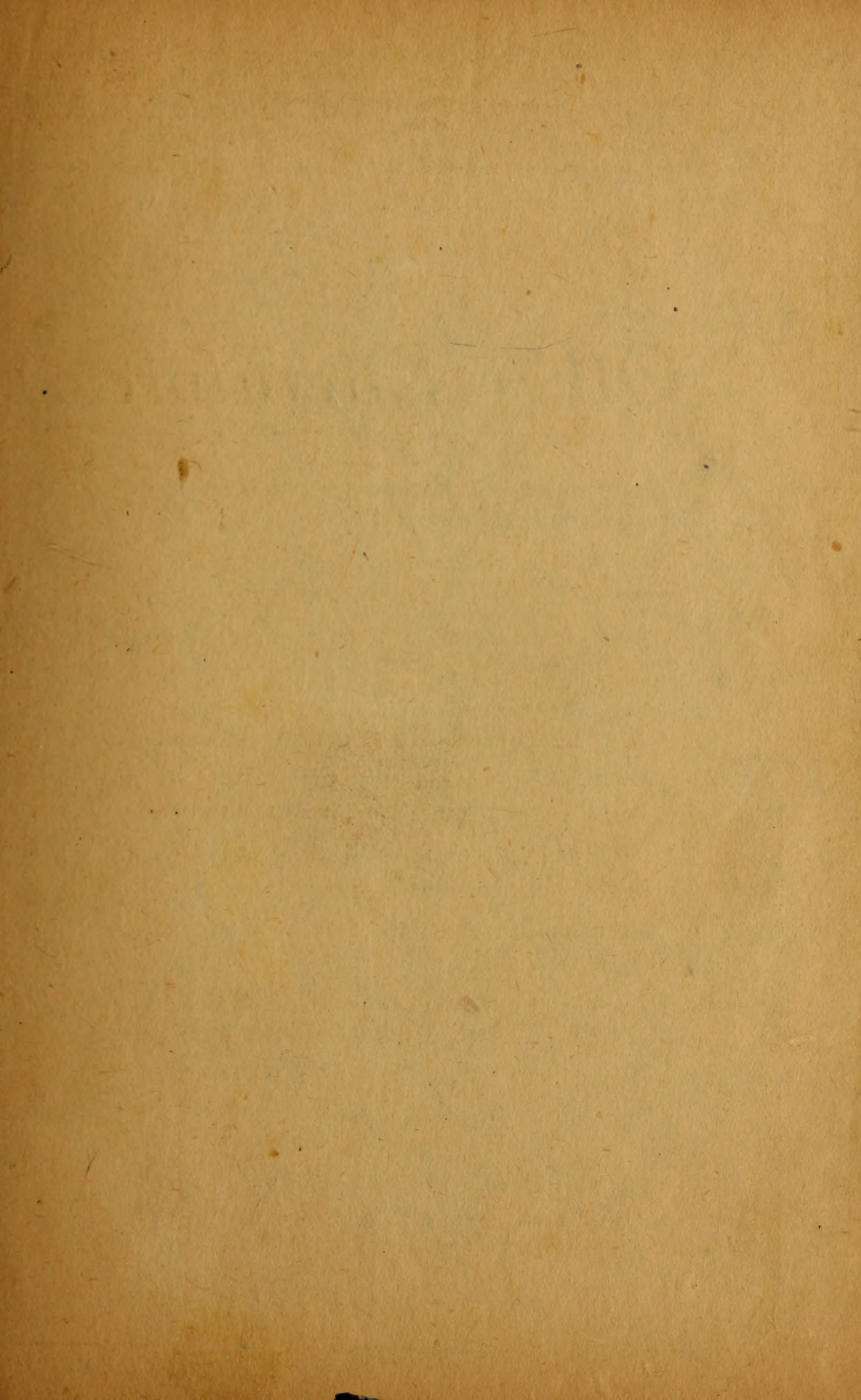
This book is a conspicuous instance of the propaganda which was perfectly natural during the war, just as French propaganda was perfectly natural among us during the period of our American Revolution, but which is today as dangerous to the true welfare and to the true

moral destiny of the American Republic as French propaganda came to be during Washington's administration, when Washington rose against it and, in spite of all talk about "allies" and about "enemies,"

restored America to an absolute non-interest and non-interference in foreign quarrels involving no American motive and capable of determining no issue of Americanism.

WILLIAM HARD.





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